

THE PRESBYTERIAN OF THE SOUTH

VOL. 1.

ATLANTA, GA., JANUARY, 27, 1909.

NO. 4.

—This Week—

Conformed to Christ.

The Chapman-Alexander Meeting.

Is the "Ecclesia Docens" Passing?

Calvin at Geneva and Strasburg.

Shimei the Persistent Traitor.

A Fresh Start Towards Christ.

Progress of the Gospel in Korea.

The Children's Department.

World Wide Endeavor.

Home and Foreign Missions.

Appeal for Home Missions in Louisiana.

The Nanking Seminary.

Editorial Notes

It is a little more important to know how to bring heaven to us while we live than to know how to get there when we die.

It is possible for a preacher to make his sermon so long as to destroy its effectiveness. Its effectiveness depends on the hearer's power of retaining thoughts. This power varies with different people and it varies with different classes of themes. The preacher must find out the limit of the hearer's power and not transgress it.

In listening to a narrative, the limits are broad. To a story of adventure, people will listen by the hour. But with a closely knitted argument the limit is much narrower; it is not half so long. On this line of thought, if the sermon be too long the mind of the hearer will weary and forget not only the latter part of the sermon, but the earlier part as well.

Often have we read a story of an old Scotch preacher who asked one of his hearers, on Monday, what was his text the day before: and she could not tell him. Those were the days when the sermon extended from first to sixteenthly. Of course she could not tell him. Fifteenthly and sixteenthly and the effort to retain all the intervening heads had temporarily paralyzed the memory.

Not very many years ago, a minister was invited to preach in the vacant pulpit in the town of X—. Early on Monday one of the ruling elders came to the city, and said, "We would like to call that man as pastor, but he preached an hour in the morning, and almost an hour at night." A little later the minister came in; and we ventured the suggestion that he give the people only half as much meat at a meal. "But I cannot develop a subject in less than an hour." He preached in that pulpit, the next Sunday a full hour's sermon and was not called to the pastorate.

On the other hand the preacher must remember that he is serving Christ, not the people only. There are some hearers who want only whip and syllabub. Unknowingly they would starve their own souls. The preacher may well put some of the illustrative upon his discussion to make it easier for them to listen. But duty to Christ requires that he "feed the flock" with that which promotes the growth of the soul. By the use of tact he can do both.

"There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." This fact sustained Jonathan in his brave and successful attack on the Philistines. It is worth holding to, still. It is not a matter of numbers that will determine the victory over the world for Christ. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The assignment of so many millions of heathen to so many thousands of Christians is not of God. But the duty of reaching to the utmost limit of faith and service is of God, whether that limit compass one dying soul or a myriad of such souls.

Thank you, dear Mr. Secretary Magill, for the beautiful **New Year's Card**, and its good wishes, lofty and hopeful. The same to you. "And when the year is past, may your memory yet be as bright as are your good wishes for it now!" And **The Sunday School Calendar** is altogether unique, very handsome and useful. The typography is fine and the literary matter is better. You are reminded of the Sunday School Lesson every week, and you have a Scripture reference for every day. It is the very thing to give the teachers and the scholars too. It is sold for 10 cents, and a dozen for \$1.00, by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond and Texarkana.

A committee of the last General Assembly, North, has in hand the preparation of a new catechism for the instruction of the young. This committee had a meeting a fortnight ago at the Western Theological Seminary, Allegheny, Pennsylvania. We have no doubt of the doctrinal soundness of the members of this committee, President McClure of McCormick; Prof. McKibbin, of Lane, and Prof. Schaff, of Allegheny. It is affirmed that the catechism is not meant to supplant the Westminster Catechism, but to show the needs of the Church at the present day as a manual of instruction.

But we do not see the want of another catechism, if the Shorter Catechism be properly taught. Some pastoral instruction from the pulpit, or in the teachers' class, giving analysis, showing the order and sequence, would find its way to the learners, and greatly strengthen the instruction. We have in the Shorter Catechism, the noblest manual ever made for instruction in divine truth.